



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Public Affairs Section

Accredited in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu

For Immediate Release

March 22, 2013

International Organization for Migration Launches Human Trafficking Baseline Assessment

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea: The International Organization for Migration in partnership with the PNG Department of Justice and Attorney General, launched the “Trafficking in Persons and People Smuggling Baseline Data Assessment Report” on 22 March 2013 at the Sir Buri Kidu Department of Justice and Attorney General Building during a meeting of the National Human Trafficking Committee (NHTC).

The report establishes, for the first time, a baseline assessment of current Trafficking in Persons statistics in the National Capital District, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, West Sepik, and Western Province.

U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission, Bryan Hunt, offered a keynote address to the Committee and said “Trafficking debases our common humanity, and it concerns every person...As nations, let us recommit ourselves to a sense of justice that says no child should be exploited.” He also urged the Government of Papua New Guinea and Members of Parliament to introduce and pass the *People Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons* bill which will amend the criminal code of Papua New Guinea and give law enforcement and prosecutors the necessary tools to address trafficking crimes.

The research for the report was part of the project to combat trafficking in human beings in Papua New Guinea funded by the United States government. The grant from the U.S. Department of State’s Office to Combat and Monitor Trafficking in Persons to the International Organization for Migration aims to strengthen the capacity of the PNG Government to prevent human trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and protect victims of trafficking.

The United States of America has a particular interest in combating Trafficking in Persons. Human trafficking or human exploitation can occur domestically or internationally, any time a person is coerced or forced or deceived into involuntary servitude. Trafficking victimizes perhaps as many as 27 million men, women, and children worldwide. The United States works actively with the government of Papua New Guinea not only to combat trafficking, but to help implement programs to combat corruption, increase transparency and improve governance in extractive industries, and improve the rule of law.

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